



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON

# Finance

SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY, OF IOWA - CHAIRMAN

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Closing Statement of Chairman Chuck Grassley  
Hearing, "Medicare and Social Security Benefits:  
Turning off the Spigot to Prisoners, Fugitives, the Deceased and Other Ineligibles"  
Wednesday, April 25, 2001

I want to thank the witnesses who testified today. Your testimony has been very helpful in focusing the issue of improper government payments. Moreover, your testimony will help this Committee in determining how best to stem the tide of lost taxpayer dollars as a result of government error or fraud.

As we have heard today, improper payments is a very complex issue, and there are no quick fixes. The HHS IG and the SSA IG have both studied these problems and will continue to do so. They have developed recommendations that need to be followed through on. I would like both the HCFA and the SSA to report to me on a quarterly basis their progress toward implementing these recommendations.

We have also heard today that there may be ways in which the Congress can address some of these problems through legislation. I intend to take a good, hard look at these options. If a new law will actually help to solve a problem, I will pursue it and hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle would support my efforts. Also, it is clear something needs to be done to determine the barriers to effective communication and transfer of information between federal, state and local governments. To this end, I expect to request a study that will assist the Committee in fashioning common-sense solutions.